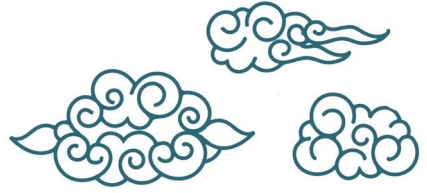


5 - Cloud Hands in Horse Stance

This movement focuses the silk-reeling movements of the waist. By rotating the hips and shoulders, your waist and abdomen are massaged as your arms are moved from side to side. The movements of your hands are as gentle as clouds floating through the sky.



The name silk reeling was derived from the twisting and spiraling movements of silkworm larva as it wraps itself in its cocoon. To draw out the silk from the cocoon, one must move smoothly and consistently. Moving too fast breaks the silk; moving too slow causes the silk to stick to itself and become tangled.

The "silk" in these exercises is a reference to the sinews (tendons and ligaments) of the body, which are stretched through twisting (as in silk reeling) or pulling (as in pulling the silk) in order to develop vibrational power. Cultivation of these sinews (which possess a tensile strength greater than steel) is central to internal martial arts and neigong. They say that it is better to stretch the sinews a quarter of an inch than to grow the muscles three inches. It is for this reason that power in internal martial arts is generated through cultivation of these sinews, rather than by focusing on the major muscle groups.

Silk reeling is a core method of movement used in solo taiji forms, solo exercises (chan si gong), and two person exercises (push hands).

Transitioning from previous movement

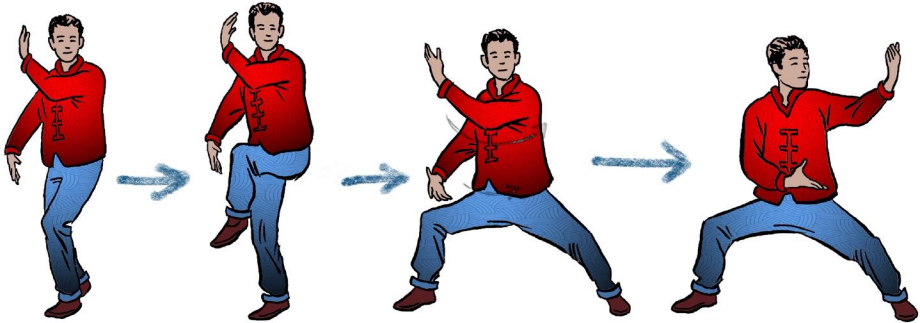
- a. Continuing from the end of the previous movement, bring both of your hands together in front of your chest. (M 5.1)
- b. Move your right foot to the instep of your left, placing your heels together with both knees



M 5.1

slightly bent. (M 5.2)

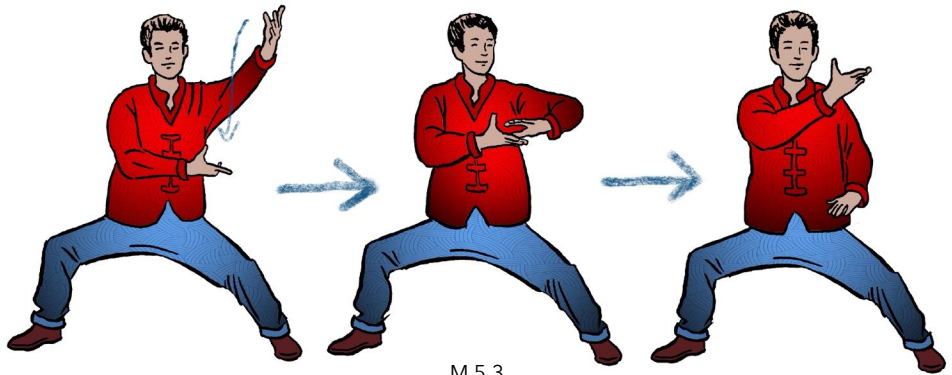
- c. Move both palms so they face each other in front of and below your right shoulder.



M 5.2

Part 1

- a. Move your hands as though you are hugging a big tree. Your left hand should be high, with your fingertips raised to the height of your head. Your right hand should be lowered to hip level. Your left hand faces your head. Your right hand should face your left elbow.
- b. As you do this, shift your weight to your right foot. Lower your stance and lift your left foot until your heel is even with your knee.
- c. Look and turn slightly to the left as you step out with your left foot into a horse stance.
- d. Rotate your body to the left, turn your head to the left and turn your eyes to the left. Your arms should maintain their position of embracing a tree. Your body should use spiraling power (jin).
- e. This spiraling move stretches the muscles of the shaoyang muscle channel (the Triple Warmer channel and Gallbladder channel), the trapezius and the latissimus dorsi.
- f. The palm of your lower hand should be directed toward the elbow of your upper arm (shāohǎi point - Heart 3/Lesser Sea).



M 5.3

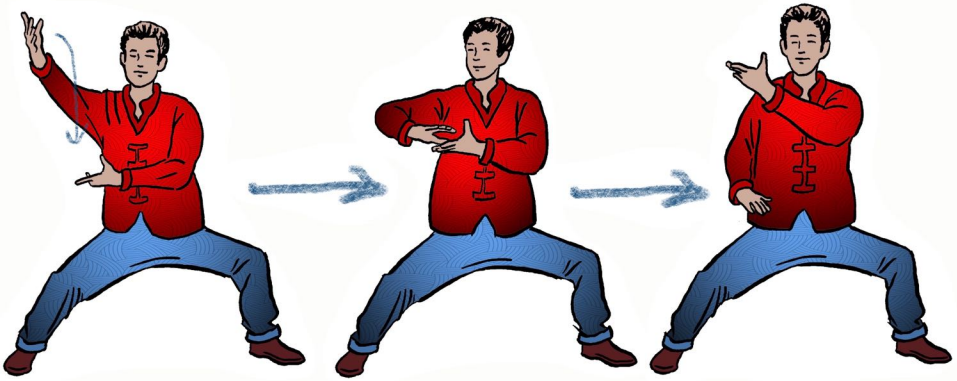
Changing direction:

- g. Move the palms of your hands towards each other as if you are holding a small ball at the level of your heart. (M 5.3)
- h. Your lower hand continues to press upward as your upper hand continues to press downward.
- i. Rotate your palms so that they face toward your body (as if you are hugging a tree). Then adjust your lower hand so that your palm is directed at the upper elbow. (M 5.4)



M 5.4

- j. Rotate your body to the right, turn your head to the right, and turn your eyes to the right. Your arms maintain their position of embracing a tree. Your body uses spiraling power (jin).
- k. Repeat the Changing Direction sequence on this side of the body. (M 5.5)



M 5.5

- I. Repeat the overall pattern of rotating to the left and then the right. (M 5.6)



M 5.6

Stepping out on the opposite side

Part 2:

- a. This motion should be done in a manner identical to its opposite-side version, aside from the reversal of direction.
- b. Draw your weight to your left foot and draw in your right foot to the left instep.
- c. Lift your right foot and gently step out to the right into a horse stance. The depth of your stance should depend on the strength of your legs.

- d. Turn toward your right, feeling the stretch in your right side as you extend your right arm. Use your waist as your central axis. Your hips do not turn, your shoulders do.
- e. Once you have turned to the right, reverse the positions of your arms/hands and turn to the left. (M 5.6)
- f. Repeat this pattern, alternating left and right sides as many times as desired.



M 5.7

Transitioning to movement 6

- a. When you are ready to transition to movement 6, the Great Peng Spreads Wings, if finishing with your right arm extended, reach out with both arms to the right as you shift your weight to your right foot. Bring your fingertips together as you form a right-weighted bow and arrow stance.
- b. The palms of your hands should face each other with a half a fist's width between the center of your palms. (M 5.7)

Additional information to enhance practice:

This posture uses the following qi guiding patterns:

1. Breathe into the middle dantian.
2. Extend qi out from the middle dantian to the palms of your hands.

Let your qi flow
like clouds

